United Nations A/70/679–S/2016/35

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
15 January 2016
English
Original: Spanish

General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda item 120
Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit for your consideration a non-paper by the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations containing a summary of the ideas and proposals from participants in the open debate held on 20 October 2015 by the Spanish presidency of the Security Council on implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) (see annex).

I should like to take this opportunity to express the deep gratitude of Spain to all the States non-members of the Security Council for their participation in and contributions to the discussion, as well as to the members of the Council who, through a presidential statement, expressed the intention of the Council to take more direct responsibility for the implementation of previously agreed decisions on working methods, and in the development of best practices.

The non-paper is based on the summary presented by the presidency at the conclusion of the open debate. By summarizing the prevailing views within the United Nations membership, concrete and operational proposals and ways to improve the working methods of the Security Council, Spain hopes to promote an ongoing commitment in this area and bridge the gap between decisions and implementation, both in the Council and in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 120, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Roman **Oyarzun**

16-00556 (E) 040216 050216

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
	A. The working methods of the Security Council: an issue that concerns the entire membership	3
	B. Room for improvement	4
II.	Transparency	4
	A. Open debates	4
	B. Other proposals to promote greater transparency	6
III.	A more efficient Security Council	9
	A. Improving the decision-making process	10
	B. A better use of working methods in conflict prevention	13
	C. Reviewing the power of veto	14
	D. The working methods as part of the broader issue of Security Council reform	15
IV.	More cooperation and coordination with other United Nations and regional organs, bodies and offices as a response to the new challenges of today's world	16
	A. United Nations bodies	17
	B. Encroachment	24
	C. Other entities and regional organs, bodies and offices	25
V.	Selection of the next Secretary-General	27
	A. More transparency and inclusiveness of the wider membership	27
	B. Profile of the candidates	28
	C. Gender equality/women candidates	28
	D. Regional rotation	29
	E. Beginning of the process/timing of the decision	29
	F. Within the Security Council: procedural suggestions and multiple candidates	29
	G. Term of office and re-election	30
VI.	Follow-up	30
	A. Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions	30
	B. Security Council	31
VII.	Statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2015/19)	31

I. Introduction

A. The working methods of the Security Council: an issue that concerns the entire membership

During the open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, held on 20 October 2015 under the presidency of Spain, the vast majority of speakers underlined the usefulness of such annual debates and the significant interest of the membership in the working methods of the Council and its decision-making process. Such interest was also shown by the number of participants at the meeting (54 speakers[1] on behalf of 162 Member States or observers: see footnotes 2, 3, 4 and 5 for details).

Among the various reasons behind the interest, the Deputy Secretary-General mentioned the high expectations of the Council and the United Nations as a whole around the world. In that regard, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain) pointed out that the annual open debate was about much more than just the working methods of the Council. It was about the decision-making culture and the effectiveness of the Council, and went to the heart of its performance. Another argument was put forward by the President of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketoft, who recalled that the full United Nations membership had conferred on the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agreed that the Council acted on the membership's behalf in carrying out its duties. Along this line, Lithuania added that, while only 15 Council members prescribe and set legally binding norms, all 193 Member States have to implement their decisions.

There was also a unanimous call for the action of the Council to be guided by the principles of transparency, inclusivity, accountability and efficiency. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), believed that a more effective, representative and transparent Council that could adequately respond to the current challenges was needed, and the United States of America underlined that with the current disparate and complex threats to international peace and security, the Council has an obligation to consider how to adapt and improve its functions. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela proposed to find effective formulas to promote greater transparency and inclusivity, if the expectations of the members of the Organization were to be met and their collective interests reflected. Sweden, as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, asked for more integrated, coherent and holistic action from the Council, and Italy recalled the growing demand for effective multilateralism. Thailand stated the need for the

[1] Angola, United States of America, Chad, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Lithuania, China, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nigeria, Russian Federation, France, Sweden, Switzerland (as coordinator of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT Group)), Germany, India, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Colombia, Poland, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Japan, Netherlands, Thailand, Italy, Egypt, Estonia (making additional remarks on the issue of the appointment of the next Secretary-General, on behalf of the ACT Group), Australia, Indonesia, Liechtenstein (making additional remarks on the issue of preventing or ending atrocity crimes, on behalf of the ACT Group), Holy See, Islamic Republic of Iran, Singapore, Uruguay, Sierra Leone, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Panama, Czech Republic, Peru, Pakistan, Cuba, Ukraine, Argentina, Algeria, South Africa, Nepal, Rwanda, Kuwait, Sudan, Tunisia and Republic of Korea.

Council and its subsidiary bodies to be efficient and transparent, ensure inclusive participation and be accountable in order to be effective.

For China, the holding of the open debate on the working methods of the Council fully reflected the positive attitude and willingness of the Council to draw on the opinions of the wider membership to further improve its work, while the Russian Federation recalled that the working methods themselves and decisions on their possible modification are the preserve of the Council.

B. Room for improvement

Despite some recent working method improvements mentioned by the United States, such as the clarification of the role of penholders, the revamp of the handover process from one subsidiary organ Chair to the next and the promotion of dialogue with United Nations bodies, and some progress in the frequency of public meetings, the flow of information to non-members of the Council and the interaction with non-traditional leaders, including representatives from civil society, as indicated by Chad, Nigeria, Switzerland (on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT Group)), Mexico and Egypt, there is still much room for improvement.

II. Transparency

A. Open debates

1. Open debates as a tool for the Security Council to assess the interactivity and effectiveness of its action and gather the views of the wider membership

As Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), pointed out, open debates and public briefings serve to make the Council more open to the wider membership, strengthening the buy-in and the legitimacy of its decisions. Portugal emphasized that they can prove very useful for listening to the general membership's views on various subjects and situations relevant to peace and security and, on the other hand, for enabling Member States to better understand the measures the Council adopts and helping to strengthen their commitment to their full implementation.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain) argued that more focus and interactivity are needed in order to ensure that open debates are a useful forum for exchanging views between the Council and the rest of the Organization. They need to be more than a platform for States to record national positions.

Furthermore, several speakers called for meaningful follow-up by the Council of the views expressed by the wider membership during such meetings, including in its "products". Concrete proposals are detailed in section III regarding the Council's efficiency in general, and in section VI pertaining specifically to the open debates on working methods.

2. Need to make open debates more efficient

In order to make open debates more efficient, Portugal pinpointed a target of concluding a productive debate in a single half day session by focusing on the messages deemed important.

The concept note for the debate (S/2015/793, annex) allotted 10 minutes to joint statements by groups, 3 minutes to national statements and only 2 minutes to national statements complementing joint statements. Most members welcomed this practice and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland raised the need to stick to schedules and keep statements to the agreed-on length. However, Nepal and India said that Council members should set an honourable precedent for non-members by making concise and meaningful speeches, rather than asking them to abbreviate their statements on important issues.

In line with the recommendation by the presidency to deliver joint statements, the Netherlands spoke also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg, Sweden on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement,[2] Kuwait on behalf of the Group of Arab States,[3] Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States,[4] and Switzerland as the coordinator of the ACT Group, a cross-regional group of 25 countries.[5] France and Germany delivered a joint statement and Angola spoke also on behalf of Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain, six Council members from six different regions of the world, an initiative which the Russian

---

[2] Non-Aligned Movement members (120 as at April 2015): Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

[3] Group of Arab States: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

[4] Group of African States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

[5] ACT Group members: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay. Switzerland is the coordinator of the Group.

Federation qualified as a genuine revolution in the working methods of the Council and asked to be supported.

Other proposals to improve the open debates were made by Lithuania, which suggested that more thought should be given to structuring open debates better in order to avoid having ministers from countries that are not Council members addressing the Council with an audience of junior experts there to listen, and by India, which asked for transparency in determining the list of speakers.

B. Other proposals to promote greater transparency

1. Political will to implement the working methods

Throughout the debate, delegations conveyed their appreciation for the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and its different chairmanships, and recalled the guidance provided to the Council by the numerous presidential notes. In that regard, Pakistan stated that improvements in the working methods of the Council were due in no small measure to the persistent efforts of its non-permanent members.

However, some delegations, such as the United Kingdom, Kazakhstan and Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), pointed out that, besides having good working methods, what is really needed is the political will to use them effectively. In that regard, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), recalled that presidential notes are couched in vague language and often not applied, and that some Council members even resist implementing them. That reflects the disconnect between the Council's working methods, the annual open debate on working methods and the Informal Working Group. To bridge that gap, the ACT Group suggested that the Council prepare a note that would consolidate and streamline all decisions taken regarding working methods.

2. Formalization of the provisional rules of procedure

The issue of the rules of procedure of the Security Council was also brought up in the context of achieving greater transparency, with Pakistan considering it unfortunate that, to date, they remain provisional. For their part, Cuba, Algeria, Singapore, Sierra Leone (on behalf of the Group of African States), Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Costa Rica requested the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council to be formalized in order to improve the transparency and accountability of the Council's work, regulate it and put an end to the excessively discretional nature of its actions.

However, Angola, speaking on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), recalled that meaningful changes are driven by practice, by taking the initiative and leading by example as much as by rules and procedure. In that regard, the six Council members stated that the Council will improve its performance by adapting its working methods in innovative ways to meet the needs of specific cases.

Rwanda pointed out that, while waiting for the adoption of definitive rules of procedure, various notes on the working methods of the Council will greatly

contribute to a more transparent, democratic and effective Council, provided that they are implemented in good faith.

3. More public meetings of the Security Council

The ACT Group and Thailand welcomed the efforts of the Council to hold open meetings, and Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Argentina called for open or public meetings to be convened more frequently, in order to enable countries, particularly those whose cases are under consideration, to contribute to the discussion. Kazakhstan said there should be genuine, meaningful interaction among Member States rather than prepared statements that are read out. Along the same line, Peru requested the public meetings to be substantive meetings and held at the appropriate time, and Costa Rica urged non-permanent members to use all means at their disposal to ensure that the Council increases both its transparency and its effective engagement with other relevant stakeholders.

Going even further, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Brazil, Cuba, Paraguay, Tunisia and Turkey asked for closed meetings and informal consultations to be kept to a minimum and be the exception rather than the rule.

4. Added value of Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues

Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)) and the United Kingdom stressed the need for having more time for horizon-scanning or for hearing from people on the ground, including through Arria-formula meetings. Many delegations, such as France and Germany, the ACT Group, Australia, Turkey, Algeria, the Republic of Korea and Tunisia, underlined the added value of Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues. The United States stated that Arria-formula meetings provide an important venue for the Council to hear views beyond those of Member States and constitute a way to inform itself informally about the difficult issues on its agenda.

The Russian Federation, despite advocating improved coordination of the activities of the Council with the broadest possible circle of Member States, argued that, in recent years, there has been a growing trend to use such meetings to stage propaganda spectacles in which certain delegations seek to promote their own unilateral positions, and called for the use of the Arria formula exclusively for its original end of providing greater clarity to the Council with respect to situations on its agenda.

5. Increased flow of information to non-members of the Council: presidency's briefings and wrap-up sessions, monthly assessments and annual and special reports

The seeking of information and understanding regarding the Council's activities remains a crucial and legitimate request.

In that regard, the Sudan recalled the note by the President of the Security Council on the reform of procedural matters (S/2010/507) and the fact that making the Council's daily agenda available and circulating the monthly journal to all States Members are priorities. It also conveyed appreciation for the efforts of those

Member States that, while taking over the presidency of the Council, organized a briefing to present the monthly agenda. In the same vein, the ACT Group, Algeria, France and Germany, Mexico, Thailand and Tunisia requested the members of the Council to continue the practice of providing wrap-up meetings and informal briefing sessions to non-members.

Regarding the Security Council monthly assessments, the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, called upon the Council to ensure that they are comprehensive and analytical and issued in a timely fashion. In this respect, the Non-Aligned Movement suggested that the General Assembly consider proposing parameters for the elaboration of such assessments.

Although credit was given to the annual report of the Security Council as an important source of information to non-members, the President of the General Assembly took the opportunity to recollect the calls from Member States for further improvement of its analytical quality. With that aim, Pakistan requested that the annual report be substantive, argued that meaningful interaction between the Council and the Assembly on it would be helpful and signalled that taking up some of the proposals set out in the letter written in 2014 by the President of the Assembly in that regard could be a good beginning. Paraguay, Rwanda and Thailand indicated that it should be more than a collection of resolutions and statistics and a summary of meetings and decisions adopted, and include assessments of its effectiveness and ways forward with concrete recommendations. Along the same line, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Algeria and Cuba asked for the annual report to be more explanatory, comprehensive and analytical, for it to assess the work of the Council, include also the cases in which the Council had failed to act, the views expressed by members during the consideration of the agenda items and the circumstances under which the Council adopted the various outcomes. Lithuania also suggested taking a fresh look at the possibilities of adjusting the structure of the annual report of the Council in line with the realities of the information age.

The Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Cuba further requested the Council to submit special reports for the consideration of the Assembly, pursuant to Articles 15 (1) and 24 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations.

Furthermore, regarding information from Member States to the Council, Guatemala voiced concern about the increase in the number of letters sent to the presidency of the Council with the aim of justifying military action taken in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, arguing that the members should question whether such communications genuinely comply with the obligation under the Charter to report immediately any action taken under that provision, as well as the legality of their open format.

6. Greater transparency of the subsidiary organs

The request for greater transparency extended also to the subsidiary organs of the Council. The aim is to enable the wider membership to have a better understanding of what those bodies do, raise awareness, provide a platform for sharing good practices and improve implementation, whether of sanctions regimes or counter-terrorism measures.

Lithuania and India indicated that the practice of the sanctions committees' Chairs briefing the Council in public should become standard and that the Counter-Terrorism Committee should engage with the membership. Moreover, sanctions committees should engage actively with the countries concerned and their neighbours and with relevant regional actors. The Chairs of subsidiary bodies should also visit the countries concerned and make better use of press statements and other forms of media engagement. Lithuania further suggested that press statements and other forms of media engagement by relevant subsidiary bodies or their Chairs — although the practice is not common — offer additional avenues for outreach and disseminating relevant information and should be further explored.

For their part, Turkey, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States) stated that subsidiary organs should function in a manner that provides adequate and timely information on their activities to the broad United Nations membership. Moreover, Cuba argued that non-members of the Council should have access to the subsidiary bodies, including the right to participate in their discussions.

Pakistan called for a transparent process leading to a balanced representation on the Council's expert panels, and Argentina underlined the need to respect due process in the Council's sanctions committees, in particular with regard to the listing and delisting of persons.

Both Argentina and Pakistan underlined the need for the Office of the Ombudsperson to be strengthened and said that there is no justification for limiting its role to only one sanctions committee.

Citing a different approach, Portugal suggested that the Council could also channel interaction through the subsidiary bodies, such as the sanctions committees and working groups, particularly those on peacekeeping and conflict prevention, and proposed that the Council do some thinking on how to make better use of the subsidiary bodies, including existing working groups, to capture the signs of emerging challenges to peace and security that are closely connected to the larger development agenda.

III. A more efficient Security Council

There was wide consensus on the need for a more action-oriented and efficient Security Council. In this connection, Chad stated that the absence of any progress in certain crises clearly demonstrates that the organ is not efficiently and responsibly fulfilling its mandate as it addresses the challenges of the twenty-first century. Indonesia, and Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), echoed the same concern, that the Council is clearly falling short of its mandate of maintaining international peace and security. Several situations were mentioned to illustrate the Council's failure to live up to those expectations, including the cases of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic (mentioned by Chad, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia) and the situations in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s, and currently in the Syrian Arab Republic (mentioned by Liechtenstein).

A. Improving the decision-making process

Different proposals were thus made to enhance the efficiency of the Council, with Angola, speaking on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), calling for the Council to throw off some of the constrictions that have cramped even the way it discusses matters, let alone how it makes decisions.

1. The need for more political focus and for invigorating the consultations

To that aim, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), requested working methods that produce effective political focus in the Council's work and, in that regard, called for more discipline and restraint in the range of initiatives considered or taken by the Council, many of which distract the Council from real problem-solving.

At the same time, the United Kingdom noted how formal the working methods could be, recalling that even in the allegedly informal meetings of the Council there were too many prepared speeches and too few genuine discussions. For its part, Lithuania asked for the "interactive" to be put back into the interactive debates, and for the Council to engage in genuine exchanges not limited to the reading of prepared statements.

Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States, criticized the inconsistency of the Council's decisions by its demonstrated selectivity in addressing issues of grave concern to regional organizations.

2. Consensus should not be turned into 15 vetoes

A more efficient Council also means, as argued by Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), Australia and the United Kingdom, that deciding on procedural matters by consensus should not prevent the Council from taking the necessary action. Furthermore, it should not be elevated to the point where a 15-member veto was possible, not just in the Council itself, but also in its subsidiary bodies, including its sanctions committees.

3. Greater inclusivity of the Security Council itself

There were many voices demanding a more active role to be granted to non-permanent members in the work of the Council, be it through more inclusive consultations in the development of resolutions and presidential statements, the review of the penholdership system or more time for non-permanent members to prepare and be ready to deliver in the Council.

Consultations

Regarding consultations, China underlined that, before any action is taken, every effort should be made to reach consensus through patient negotiations among Council members so as to preserve the credibility and authority of the product at stake. For Egypt, the Council could benefit from more deliberations and consultations among its members.

Drafting of resolutions and presidential statements

The Czech Republic asked that the exchange with non-member States be intensified in drafting resolutions and presidential statements. Cuba stated that the Council's resolutions and presidential statements should reflect the views of Member States as expressed in the public debates. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), together with Cuba and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), agreed on the negative impact of the veto on the working methods of the Council, whereby elected members are routinely excluded for no reason other than habit. In the same vein, Paraguay deplored the treatment of certain items as reserved and withheld exclusively for the permanent members, considering it a discredit to the work of the multilateral system. Overall, the common denominator was the need for a more inclusive process of developing resolutions and presidential statements and for participation of both permanent and non-permanent members on an equal footing.

The penholdership system

The Russian Federation pointed out that the Council would benefit from a democratization of its work, facilitated by a more balanced distribution of obligations informally linked to the penholdership system. In that regard, it stated that certain Council members should not consider countries or even regions to be their exclusive purview or act as mentors on issues concerning those countries. Along this line, Chad considered the role of the penholder to be an anachronism and a form of guardianship that should be banished, together with Rwanda, which recalled the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2014/268), in which the right of any Council member to be a penholder was recognized. Both called for Council members representing the regions affected by conflicts on the Council's agenda to at least share the pen with the current penholders.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), together with Brazil, Pakistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), were of the view that the penholdership system has improved the Council's efficiency but has also diminished the opportunity for wider Council engagement, especially by the elected members, and has significantly increased the risk of Council products being crafted in a way that serves only the interests of the permanent members. Therefore, they encouraged changes to the penholdership system in order for it to regain a sense of ownership and collective responsibility over the Council's work, ensure necessary continuity by including permanent and elected members, and leverage members' relevant expertise, whether that be regional or through their chairmanship of subsidiary bodies or another source. For Italy, elected members could make a bigger contribution to the work of the Council by acting as a bridge to non-members of the Council and their concerns.

Other proposals were made by the ACT Group, which expressed its satisfaction that two countries on the Council had co-led visiting missions and suggested that the practice could serve as an example for the drafting of the products of the Council, and by Brazil, which recalled the positive experience of the Group of Friends of Haiti and indicated that it could be replicated. Pakistan linked the issue of the early election of non-permanent members to the penholdership system as a way to enable the Council to have more penholders from among the non-permanent members.

Transitional arrangements for newly elected Security Council members

The level of preparedness of incoming members of the Council was another area touched upon. The President of the General Assembly recalled the decision to conduct the elections of the non-permanent members of the Council six months before they assume their responsibilities, precisely with the aim of enabling the newcomers to better prepare for their two-year term on the Council. Along the same lines, Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), also welcomed the decision to hold Council elections six months before the start of the new members' term, further emphasized the need for new non-permanent members to be prepared and mentioned the annual Finnish workshop, aimed at providing new members with an in-depth orientation in Council practice, procedures and working methods. Kazakhstan argued that, to perform effectively from the start, during the interim period after their election but before they take their seats, the elected members should be allowed to attend meetings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, as well as informal consultations of the whole, in order to become acquainted with their new roles.

Chairs of subsidiary bodies

Pakistan said that the early election of non-permanent members will enable the Council to allocate the Chairs of subsidiary bodies in a timely manner. The importance of an early appointment of the Chairs of the Council's subsidiary bodies was also pointed out by the Deputy Secretary-General, who said that it is important that the new Chairs be able to hit the ground running, with solid knowledge of the work of their committees or working groups. He recalled that the Secretariat assists the outgoing Chairs in preparing documentation for the incoming Chairs.

Nevertheless, Chad called for a more open and inclusive process in the designation of the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies and working groups, and Switzerland, on behalf of the ACT Group, underlined the need to ensure continuity in the work of the subsidiary bodies. Lithuania considered that the handover from Chair to Chair should be better managed and streamlined and that closer cooperation among the Council's subsidiary bodies should be promoted.

Sanctions committees

Regarding the sanctions committees, some speakers, such as Thailand, recalled that sanctions are important tools for maintaining and restoring peace and security, and others, such as Chad, referred to the important role of the Council's subsidiary bodies.

Other speakers focused mainly on efficiency. The Russian Federation considered that the Council is increasingly pushed into adopting sanctions mechanisms by invoking Chapter VII of the Charter, but that the effectiveness of such decisions leaves a lot to be desired, as they often lead to merely worsening a crisis. For its part, China encouraged pushing for the diplomatic settlement of disputes and handling of crises and, wherever possible, avoiding simply resorting to the threat or use of sanctions. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela suggested that the sanctions committees should operate alongside an ongoing political process and thus have a clear end date, further stressed that objectives should be clearly circumscribed, and recalled that sanctions should be used neither as a political tool

against countries and peoples nor as an end unto themselves, but rather as an instrument bound to the solution of a given conflict.

In order to improve the efficiency of such instruments, Lithuania underlined the need to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to provide adequate assistance to the sanctions committees in their work and argued that visits by the Chairs of subsidiary bodies to the countries concerned should be further encouraged and that consideration should also be given, where appropriate, to closer cooperation among the Council's subsidiary bodies. Thailand asked for the application of clear criteria in listing and delisting and for streamlined communications with Member States to address the increasing number of sanctions-related issues.

Both Kazakhstan and Thailand suggested proper assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the sanctions regimes in order to minimize unintended economic and social consequences, with Thailand further proposing a research-based approach, including the use of statistical analysis to evaluate and quantify the impact and effectiveness of sanctions and to provide valuable guidance for future policymaking.

B. A better use of working methods in conflict prevention

Conflict prevention was a recurrent theme for most speakers. There was broad consensus on the needed revitalization of Chapter VI of the Charter to renew the focus on the peaceful settlement of disputes by promoting good offices and mediation efforts or, as Peru pointed out, to move from a conflict management approach to a prevention approach.

In that respect, Chad, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Russian Federation deplored the excessive and quick resort to Chapter VII of the Charter and called for full utilization of the provisions of Chapters VI and VIII for the pacific settlement of disputes, instead of simply resorting to the threat or use of such methods as sanctions.

Many delegations also insisted on the need for the Council to make better use of the tools at its disposal, including fully exploiting early warning mechanisms, in order to reinforce its preventive role when dealing with threats to peace and security. Side by side with the suggestions put forward in the context of the Council's relationship with other partners, be they United Nations entities or not, as laid out in section IV, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the ACT Group and the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg) noted that horizon-scanning briefings, Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues could help to bring potential crises and deteriorating situations to the early attention of Council members. Lithuania and Australia recalled the usefulness of timely briefings or the use of the item "any other business" on threats, in line with Article 99 of the Charter, to strengthen the Council's preventive approach. For the United Kingdom, improved day-to-day interactions of the Council could lead to more time for horizon-scanning or for hearing from people on the ground, including through Arria-formula meetings. Likewise, doing more to connect the various parts of the United Nations and link the development agenda to the Council's work on peace and security would be a way to ensure that the Council's work is not just about ending conflicts, but also about avoiding future ones.

C. Reviewing the power of veto

Nearly all Member States referred to the veto power.

The Russian Federation stated that it is unclear why the veto is sometimes criticized by representatives of countries or regions that, in the absence of the veto, would find themselves under massive pressure from a particular group of States, and suggested that they consider their own national interests. Mexico pointed out that the veto is a responsibility, not a privilege, and Kazakhstan stressed that it should be exercised with the greatest caution. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), noted that the veto may not be, strictly speaking, a working method, but that it has a significant negative impact — a cascade effect — on the working methods of the Council. Ukraine claimed that, if the veto is used, the permanent member resorting to it should explain the reasons for such action, in particular with regard to its consistency with the Charter of the United Nations, and called for the proper implementation of Article 27 (3) of the Charter, which obliges a party to a dispute to abstain from voting.

There was a broad call for the revision of the veto power by such countries as the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Rwanda and South Africa, which recalled the Elders initiatives. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela further considered that use of the veto has thwarted the legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian State to be admitted as a full Member of the United Nations, despite the overwhelming support on the part of Organization's membership.

Australia asked for restraint on use of the veto and negative votes, while Indonesia and Cuba requested its abolishment and welcomed any steps to strictly regulate its use.

Numerous delegations (France and Germany, Lithuania, Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT Group), Saudi Arabia, Guatemala, Japan, the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Thailand, Italy, Singapore, Turkey, Panama, Peru, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)) and Ukraine) reiterated their support to the initiative by France and Mexico to regulate the use of the veto in the case of the most serious crimes as defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Brazil and Tunisia further welcomed the initiative and Chad, while conveying its support, requested that its contours be clarified, given that the holder of the right has the freedom to use it even in those exceptional conditions if it considers that its vital interests are threatened. Chad further added that, nonetheless, the best way to limit the misuse of the veto is through Charter reform.

The code of conduct of the ACT Group for Security Council actions against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes also gathered broad support, from the United Kingdom, France and Germany, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Guatemala, Japan, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Thailand, Italy, Singapore, Turkey, Panama, Peru and Ukraine.

Liechtenstein, making additional remarks on behalf of the ACT Group on the issue of preventing or ending atrocity crimes, recalled that by committing to the code, States pledge that, while serving as members of the Council, they will support timely and decisive action by the Council to prevent or end atrocity crimes. They also pledge

more specifically not to vote against a credible draft resolution submitted to that end. In that respect, Singapore stressed that, if the permanent members of the Council feel they must use their right to veto, they should at least explain to the wider United Nations membership why they cannot support initiatives aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocities. For its part, Brazil claimed that such a code should also address certain other aspects relating to prevention and accountability: that military action is a measure of last resort that can take place only in conformity with the Charter, and that decisions authorizing the use of force should rely on enhanced procedures for monitoring and assessing their implementation.

D. The working methods as part of the broader issue of Security Council reform

A number of speakers stressed that the issue of the working methods of the Council is an integral part of a much more ambitious endeavour, its reform process, and reiterated their well-known positions on the matter. They made clear that it is one major task that the international community should take up as it celebrates the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

In that vein, India argued that the problems afflicting the Council go deeper than its working methods. While a focus on working methods is useful, it can in no way be a substitute for reforming the Council in a manner that would give its decisions legitimacy and acceptability. Saudi Arabia reminded all present that the process of Council reform had begun in 1993 but, although positive results had been achieved in such areas as transparency and broader participation, it had, unfortunately, not yet been possible to find a comprehensive solution that allowed the Council to address its fundamental tasks as might have been wished. In the same spirit, Algeria called upon Member States to keep in mind that a two-track reform of the Council must be tackled, one structural and the other dealing with the working methods. Similarly, Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, underscored that the efficiency of the Council was primarily dependent on the reform of its working methods, while at the same time recognizing the possibility of taking gradual steps with regard to improving the working methods of the Council.

Cuba considered that a genuine reform of the Council to transform it into a transparent, representative and democratic organ continues to be an outstanding issue and that, without that reform, the reform of the Organization will be incomplete. Furthermore, although changes to the Council's working methods are an essential aspect of its reform, the ones made to date have been merely formal and do not guarantee the genuine participation of Member States in the work and decision-making within the Council. Indonesia recalled that merely improving the working methods is not a solution to the larger problem, that efforts cannot be limited to procedures, and that it would continue to call for and contribute to efforts to realize a democratic, judicious, transparent, accountable and effective Council that reflects the plurality and concerns of all people. The Republic of Korea supported the idea that the working methods of the Council must be improved with a view to enhancing the Council's transparency, accountability, legitimacy and efficiency as an important matter within the broader context of Council reform. It stood ready to work with others to formulate a solution that could garner the support and understanding of the broader membership.

For his part, the President of the General Assembly recalled that the Assembly had decided to immediately continue the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during its seventieth session, and conveyed his intention to move the process forward as much as possible in the coming period.

While Poland looked forward to a swift resumption of the negotiations and Italy argued that the members must not shy away from debating the reform of the Council, with a view to making it more representative, transparent, democratic, effective and accountable, Mexico expressed hope that the spirit of cooperation seen in the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly will be transferred to the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, and confidence that reforming the structure of the Council is possible if all parties place political will and commitment before any other consideration in the negotiations.

Panama further recalled that the current process of Security Council reform is a matter of growing interest to 97.4 per cent of this community and represents no less than the need for States to ensure that their membership is representative of current geopolitical and regional realities.

Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), argued the need for a reformed Council that is truly representative and reflects the current geopolitical realities, and in which Africa, Asia and Latin America are adequately represented, thus supporting the intergovernmental process on Security Council reform and efforts to move the process forward. France and Germany also supported an equitable representation on and expansion of the Council.

The geographical representation was the main point made by the African speakers. The Sudan considered that the reform of the modus operandi and procedures of the Council constitutes an important part of achieving comprehensive reform in a manner that would establish equitable geographical representation of the world's continents, especially with regard to Africa. Chad and Sierra Leone, speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, recalled that Africa is currently the only continent in the world with neither a permanent representative nor the veto power. Thus, the legitimacy and credibility of the Council and the effectiveness of its action will depend in the future on the participation of all its members, on an equal footing. Rwanda further reinforced this position, as a member of both the African Group and the L.69 Group, arguing that, more than ever, the Council should be expanded in both categories, with the same rights and privileges, including the right to veto, as long as it exists. In the meantime, it is critical that the Council continue to improve its working methods, with a focus on transparency, effectiveness, inclusiveness and fairness. South Africa echoed the position, reiterating its commitment to the Ezulwini Consensus, which seeks to provide Africa with two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats.

IV. More cooperation and coordination with other United Nations and regional organs, bodies and offices as a response to the new challenges of today's world

The message from the three briefers and of the wider membership was clear. There is room for improvement in the way the Council cooperates with other United

Nations organs, bodies and offices, and urgency in doing so to enhance the Organization's overall preventive and reactive response to today's world.

The link between the way the Council works and its capacity and readiness to adequately respond to today's world and new challenges was also established by many, while more interaction of the Council with other entities was called for, including the troop- and police-contributing countries, the regional organizations and the Council's regional counterparts, the special representatives of the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioners, the International Criminal Court or the International Court of Justice.

Overall, as Portugal noted, the main point made was not so much on the need for the Council to recognize the importance of such interaction — that is not new. What generally emerged from the discussion was the call to put that into full practice, or, as Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), put it, the Council needs to become better at cooperating with other United Nations and regional organs, bodies and offices.

Wider security issues, such as the security challenges facing small island developing States, "which are a matter of concern to the wider membership" (Italy), and migration, as "a joint integrated challenge confronting us" (Italy), the definition of follow-up and review mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the recommendations stemming from the three major reviews under way on the future of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the role of women in peace and security make it more crucial than ever.

To that end, Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), acknowledged that the challenges in coming to grips with the new threats are indeed very daunting, but also said that the Council can move to become more effective. Above all, that requires political will.

A. United Nations bodies

As Rwanda presented it, "from socioeconomic development, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to the review of peace operations, peacebuilding, and women and peace and security, Member States and different organizations have acknowledged the importance of adjusting the activities of the United Nations to the context of the world we live in today".

In the same vein, Italy stated that "we must acknowledge that today's security challenges are different from those of the past. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development introduces an integrated approach to sustainable development by linking together the five Ps of the Agenda: people, prosperity, partnership, planet and peace. Its implementation will require a fresh look at working methods and effective synergies among the various bodies of the United Nations. Similar challenges are posed by the need for an integrated approach to implement the recommendations stemming from the three major reviews under way on the future of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the role of women in peace and security". In Egypt's view, those same milestones "offer a unique opportunity to draw upon the broad-based membership of those bodies and to ensure a more holistic approach to sustaining peace and to reinforcing the linkages between the three pillars of the work of the United Nations", thus creating the need for closer cooperation and

interaction among those organs. For its part, Kazakhstan considered that "an analysis of current conflicts and geopolitical tensions demands that we not only conduct a review but institute an immediate, appropriate, strategic and transparent implementation of the necessary reforms".

From Turkey's perspective, regular and more substantive interaction between the Council and other United Nations bodies would not only augment the Council's transparency, openness and inclusiveness, but would also enhance the efficiency of the United Nations system in general. For Costa Rica, deepening communication between the Council and other bodies and actors allows the Council to effectively carry out its tasks.

1. Secretariat

The relationship between the Security Council and the Secretariat is shaped by the administrative functions the latter carries out, as well as by several other functions entrusted to the Secretary-General under Articles 98 and 99 of the Charter. The range of tasks it encompasses makes the Secretariat, as the Deputy Secretary-General noted, a vital partner of the Council.

Within the tasks under the Secretariat's responsibility, the Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the provision of detailed and actionable information on a wide range of issues on the Council's agenda; the translation of the mandates of the Council into peacekeeping operations, special political missions, sanctions monitoring groups and bodies such as the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in the Syrian Arab Republic; the provision of institutional memory and advice to the rotating Council presidencies and to its other members; and the implementation of decisions of the Council on its working methods.

Working methods developments

Looking at how the Council and the Secretary-General can better work together to maximize impact on the ground, the Deputy Secretary-General referred to some of the recent working methods developments: the briefings via secure videoconference from United Nations offices around the world; the Council website now offering a historical record of Council activities and information (for instance, on reporting requirements and mandate renewals); the expansion of the roster of the sanctions monitoring panels' experts to ensure geographical and other diversity; improving cooperation on sanctions through the Inter-agency Working Group on United Nations Sanctions; or the support to the Council in intensifying its cooperation with regional organizations.

Areas for further improvement

A particular accent, nevertheless, was put on how the Council can and should enhance its preventive role. To that end, the Deputy Secretary-General referred to the use of the "any other business" item to raise issues of concern and to the monthly briefing by the Department of Political Affairs to Council members on situations that could become threats to international peace and security.

The United Kingdom, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the ACT Group, the Netherlands (also on

behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Lithuania and Italy broadly echoed the same view. They also called for further use by the Council of those instruments, as they are helpful in bringing potential crises and deteriorating situations to the early attention of Council members.

Australia argued for better use by the Council of early warning mechanisms and timely briefings on threats, suggesting that, in this regard, the Secretariat should be empowered to bring to the Council's attention emerging threats, in line with the Human Rights Up Front initiative and Article 99 of the Charter. Italy also welcomed the strengthening of early warning mechanisms, such as the Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes, the Human Rights Up Front initiative and the role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as valuable tools the potential of which will have to be fully exploited.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), and Portugal suggested that, in order to promote better interaction, Council members should respect the role of the presidency in organizing the Council's regular business for the month, including interactions with the Secretariat, as well as with other United Nations bodies, regional organizations and troop- and police-contributing countries.

Other suggestions aimed at improving the Council's working methods within its relationship with the Secretariat were presented, including enhancing the communications with the Secretariat before deploying peacekeeping missions or adjusting their mandates (China); enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping mandates and the triangular cooperation between the Council, the Secretariat and Member States at large, or making such cooperation more institutionalized, in particular with the troop- and police-contributing countries (Uruguay, Brazil, Rwanda, Republic of Korea); in order to maintain the effectiveness and legitimacy of the work of the Secretariat, the need to rotate the positions of the under-secretaries-general for peacekeeping, political and humanitarian affairs and certain other senior posts among all Member States and to make the process for their appointment more transparent (Russian Federation); strengthening the Secretariat's capacity to provide adequate assistance to the sanctions committees in their work (Lithuania); and the early appointment of Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Council (President of the General Assembly, Lithuania, Pakistan).

2. General Assembly

In 70 years of existence of the United Nations, as he recalled, Mogens Lykketoft was only the seventh President of the General Assembly to address the Security Council, the last time that happened having been eight years ago. Against that background, there was overall consensus on the fact that, as the President affirmed, the relationship between the Assembly and the Council could be both mutually reinforcing and complementary.

A number of areas in which the actions of both the Council and the Assembly are closely linked and even interdependent were identified by the President of the General Assembly and referred to throughout the debate. They included certain peace and security issues, the review of the Charter of the United Nations, the election of judges to international tribunals, certain recommendations from the Assembly to the Council, the Council's annual and special reports, the relations between the Council and certain subsidiary organs established by the Assembly and

the appointment of the Secretary-General. Colombia also considered it necessary to have a more comprehensive approach to peace consolidation, one that avoids fragmentation and a silo mentality in the roles of the Assembly and the Council and that takes into account the fact that not only are military and field operations part of the Council's responsibilities, but so are conflict prevention, recovery and rebuilding operations in post-conflict situations.

Areas for further improvement

Given that the General Assembly receives and considers the annual and special reports of the Security Council, which, according to the Charter, shall include an account of the measures that the Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security, a number of speakers (the President of the General Assembly, Lithuania, Thailand, Paraguay, the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba, Algeria, Pakistan, Rwanda) called for the improvement of the analytical quality of the annual report and for more special reports of the Council, with some presenting concrete proposals in that regard (as detailed in section II.B.5 on increased flow of information to non-members of the Council). As the President of the General Assembly put it, the exercise represents an important aspect of the transparency and accountability that the wider membership expects vis-à-vis the Security Council.

The timely election of the 10 non-permanent members of the Council and their adequate preparation was another area touched upon. Within the context of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, the President of the General Assembly recalled that during its seventieth session the Assembly is to hold two elections of non-permanent members, the first having already taken place and the second scheduled for June 2016. While the decision was welcomed by several delegations (see section III.A.3 on greater inclusivity of the Security Council itself), Nepal considered that the election of non-permanent members should be further brought forward to allow the elected members at least one full year to prepare for their responsibilities, with a view to helping to ensure that their membership substantially enriches the work of the Council.

The importance of the way the Council works and its relationship with the Assembly was addressed most often within the context of the upcoming selection of the next Secretary-General. Proposals in that regard are detailed in section V.

3. Peacebuilding Commission

There was broad consensus on the usefulness of the relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission and its country configurations. As the United States underlined, the Council and the Commission play differentiated but complementary roles. Overall, the references made to the Commission emphasized its advisory and early warning capacity as instruments of direct importance to the Council's work.

While acknowledging the efforts made so far by the Council to strengthen its links with the Peacebuilding Commission, many speakers did stress the need for further improvement in the way the two bodies work together to maximize impact in the implementation of the Council's mandates on the ground in countries on its agenda, and encouraged more participation of the Commission and the Chairs of its country configurations in the plenary meetings of the Council (Egypt, Australia, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Argentina, Rwanda, Tunisia,

Republic of Korea, Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, Chad, Nigeria, France, Germany, Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT Group), Mexico, Japan, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg). Lithuania also suggested their participation in consultations.

With regard to thematic issues, China suggested that the Council act strictly within its mandate and enhance its communication with the Peacebuilding Commission. The Chair of the Commission recalled that the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, on the challenge of sustaining peace (A/69/968-S/2015/490), would be under consideration by Member States. It provides recommendations on how to strengthen the relationship between the Commission and the Council, including that the Council regularly request and draw upon the advice of the Commission.

Moreover, and in the same vein as when referring to the relationship with the Secretariat, the call was particularly strong on the Council to make greater use of the Commission's early warning capacity. Several speakers, including Australia and Brazil, recalled that the recent peacebuilding review found that the Council should do better on conflict prevention and that overcoming fragmentation between the principal organs of the United Nations would strengthen its work in preventing conflict and sustaining peace, and called upon the Council to draw more regularly on the Commission's advice. Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), the ACT Group and Portugal intervened in the same way.

Along with suggestions on how the Council could take better advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission, ideas were also presented on which areas. For his part, the Chair of the Commission highlighted three areas where the two bodies might work better together: (a) through its convening role of a wide array of critical regional and international actors, the Commission could bring a peacebuilding perspective to the Council's decision-making; (b) the Commission could help to formulate the post-conflict strategies of the countries requesting the Commission's advice and bring priority peacebuilding issues to the attention of the Council upon its request; and (c) in support of the drawdown phase of peacekeeping operations, the Commission could help to sustain attention and commitment from the international community to national peacebuilding priorities. The United States highlighted the valuable information from diverse stakeholders on the ground in post-conflict States provided by the Commission.

4. Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council was often mentioned side by side with the Peacebuilding Commission, with many speakers calling for a renewed and strengthened relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, not only based on the fact that, as the Security Council recognized in January 2015, security and development are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing and key to attaining sustainable peace (S/PRST/2015/3), but mainly because many share the view that the 17 recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals provide an opportunity for the two bodies to build on best practices and take a renewed and active role in following up on implementation.

The Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council recalled that the relations between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council were

enshrined in the Charter of the Organization, but considered that the provision foreseen in Article 65, which states that the Economic and Social Council may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist it upon its request, had been very limited. Against that background, he viewed the definition of follow-up and review mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity to engage in a joint reflection on how the Charter bodies of the United Nations, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission, work together to translate the 2030 Agenda into tangible and coherent policy measures by the United Nations system and the international community at large. For Nigeria, the interaction between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council was almost negligible, and that, of the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, development and human rights — two of them, namely, development and human rights, fell under the purview of the Economic and Social Council. Nigeria thus called for closer interaction between both Councils, which was particularly crucial in the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Side by side with lending a "new impetus" between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as the Czech Republic and Tunisia put it, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also "underlines the important link between security and development" (Czech Republic). The same point was made by the United Kingdom and the Republic of Korea. While the United Kingdom considered Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals a good step forward in ensuring that the Council's work is not just about ending conflicts but also about avoiding future ones, the Republic of Korea attached great importance to how peacekeeping could dovetail with peacebuilding, while taking into account the visionary global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 16, on peace, justice and institutions. The Deputy Secretary-General also pointed in the same direction when referring to the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95-S/2015/446) and the subsequent report of the Secretary-General (A/70/357-S/2015/682), particularly underlining the proposals related to prevention and post-conflict measures, not least in the areas of peacebuilding and development. He further recalled that "peaceful societies" is a goal for the 2030 Agenda.

Regarding what more could be done, the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council identified several issues of common concern on which the Economic and Social Council could interact with the Security Council on a regular basis, be it through the establishment of an ad hoc working group or through more systematic interaction: the promotion of institution-building and improved governance, the need for social inclusion as a key component for sustained peace, the role of women and youth in that context, the consequences of economic and financial crises for global stability and the impact of environmental degradation on weakened societies. Portugal also suggested that the Security Council's consultation with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council could become part of a much broader aspect, conflict prevention, while seeing merit in organizing periodic meetings to discuss issues relevant to both their agendas, mentioning in this context the intention of the United Kingdom to focus, in November 2015, on the important interrelations between security and development. For Rwanda, as a partner of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council should actively participate in Security Council meetings and fulfil its mission accordingly.

For its part, Kazakhstan suggested that the Economic and Social Council be transformed into a global development council, to be developed collectively, working towards the centenary of the United Nations, under a new plan for a 2045 global strategic initiative.

5. Other United Nations organs and entities: the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice, the Human Rights Council and the special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General

While also referring to other bodies and actors, Costa Rica put particular emphasis on the importance of deepening communication between the Security Council and the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, in order to allow the Council to effectively carry out its tasks. The International Criminal Court was further cited by Argentina among the organizations mentioned in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2013/515), and with which considered dialogue is essential in fulfilling the Council's functions. For its part, Lithuania considered that the Council should make better use of the tools available to pursue justice, including cooperation with the International Criminal Court, with respect to both new referrals and the follow-up on existing referrals. Along the same lines, France and Germany also were in favour of more extensive contacts between the Council and the International Criminal Court, either through visits by the Prosecutor or of the Council to The Hague, and of the improved sharing of information across peace missions in cases where the International Criminal Court was investigating, given that the activities of the Court are in fact intrinsically linked with the justice provisions of the mandates of those operations. As Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, the Permanent Representative of Italy stressed the importance of investing in the preventive power of justice by fighting impunity and promoting accountability, thus arguing that the Council should have a forum where international criminal justice issues could be regularly discussed, bearing in mind the various sensitivities at stake.

Arguing that respect for human rights and harmonious development are inextricably linked to peace and security, France and Germany further encouraged more frequent briefings to the Council by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights or his deputy and the Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect, as well as other human rights mechanisms. Given that, from their point of view, "the protection issues are at the heart of the Council's activities and its mandated peacekeeping missions; this is the heart of a more preventive approach to crises. It is therefore natural that the Council should interact directly and frequently with those who are primarily responsible for these issues", Italy and Lithuania also explicitly referred to the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Costa Rica and the Republic of Korea found merit in regular public briefings by special envoys and special representatives of the Secretary-General.

Costa Rica included civil society organizations in the list of actors with which the Council should deepen its communication.

Portugal suggested that the Council do some thinking on how to make better use of the subsidiary bodies, including existing working groups, to capture the signs of emerging challenges to peace and security that are closely connected to the larger

development agenda — such as climate change, pandemics, illegal trafficking and organized crime — and submit timely reports on them to the Council when they deem action to be necessary.

B. Encroachment

While granting merit in finding ways to improve the relationship between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies, several delegations nevertheless called on the Council to act strictly within its mandate and called for relationships based on respect for their respective competencies.

To that end, and regarding thematic issues addressed by the Council, Argentina, China, Cuba, Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, Nepal, the Russian Federation, Tunisia and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) were of the view that the Council should deal strictly with issues relating to threats to international peace and security on which it could and must take urgent and tangible decisions.

More specifically, China suggested that the Council focus its energy and resources on addressing the most urgent issues that threaten international peace and security. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela called for a more balanced focus of the Council's work, one which avoids applying double standards in the examination of the issues under its consideration. For its part, the Russian Federation called upon the Council to be cautious when it comes to the consideration of thematic subjects, in particular those that rightly should fall within the remit of the General Assembly, arguing that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and specifically Goal 16, is not a matter for the Council. Nepal argued that the Council should not in any way allow the feeling to be perpetuated that it hijacks other bodies' agendas or trumpets them as its own. The Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, stated that the Security Council should cease its ongoing attempts to shift issues on the agenda of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council over to the Security Council and its encroachment on the functions and powers of the Assembly. Cuba voiced its concern over the growing trend in the Council to consider matters and assume functions that do not fall within its area of competence, increasingly usurping the role assigned by the Charter to other organs of the United Nations, particularly to the General Assembly. Similarly, Argentina was not in favour of the Council, the function of which is the maintenance of international peace and security, absorbing the functions of other bodies, a trend which should be discouraged, given that the securitization of the United Nations agenda could lead to the Security Council assuming such matters to the detriment of bodies with universal representation, in particular the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Algeria also said that issues on the agenda of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council should not be shifted to the Security Council agenda.

Tunisia considered that a rich dialogue and collaboration between the Security Council and the General Assembly will enhance both entities and avoid overlap between their activities and the encroachment of the Council on the functions and prerogatives of the Assembly. Brazil's position regarding the relationship between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies was that closer cooperation is needed not only with the General Assembly — particularly concerning the issue of

Security Council encroachment on the Assembly's prerogatives — but also with the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. Similarly, Egypt pointed out the need for closer cooperation and interaction among those organs, while observing a balanced respect for their respective functions and mandates.

Colombia and Lithuania, on the contrary, requested the Security Council to have a more comprehensive approach to peace consolidation, one that avoids fragmentation and a silo mentality with regard to the roles of the General Assembly and the Council. Algeria, Indonesia, and Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, stated that the Council should take into account the recommendations of the Assembly on matters relating to international peace and security.

C. Other entities and regional organs, bodies and offices

The call for reinforced dialogue and/or cooperation went beyond the United Nations, encompassing also a broad number of other relevant actors, with the main goal of helping the Council to be more efficient.

1. Concerned countries and troop- and police-contributing countries

China, Thailand, Egypt, Indonesia, Cuba and Tunisia were among those arguing that the Council should give more weight to the opinions of the countries concerned on its agenda and enhance dialogue and interaction with non-members. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), and the Netherlands, speaking also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg, also pointed towards active consultation and dialogue with countries on the Council's agenda.

Similarly, Brazil not only called for countries with a special interest in a substantive matter under consideration by the Council to have their views fully taken into account, but also to be allowed to participate in its consultations, with that applying particularly to those countries on the Council's agenda, but also to troop- and police-contributing countries. Furthermore, Kuwait, speaking on behalf of the Group of Arab States, argued that the States concerned in the questions under discussion by the Council should be allowed a decision-making role in the Council. The Sudan reasoned that Member States must share any matter that concerns them and, when dealing with such matters, the Council should allow adequate time to the States concerned when undertaking any procedure, adding that the matter should also be accorded further attention when it or its manifestation coincides with a weekend, as may be the case with developing events.

At the same time, while China recalled that such mechanisms as the meetings with the troop- and police-contributing countries and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations should be fully utilized, Costa Rica, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Nepal, Rwanda, Tunisia and the Republic of Korea argued for active consultation and dialogue with such countries. Such interaction would promote a richer understanding of the challenges and potential solutions. Also, as the Netherlands stated, doing so would contribute to greater support for the mandates of such operations and, therefore, to a more effective fulfilment of those mandates.

For their part, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, India, Mexico, Egypt, Indonesia, Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Pakistan and Ukraine supported timely consultations with the troop- and police-contributing countries on the definition, amendment or renewal of mandates. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), specifically argued that troop- and police-contributing countries possess "knowledge and challenges that they acquire in the field" which represent "an asset that the Council must consider when discussing its mandates". From Egypt's perspective, "consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries should address the political and long-term strategy of the relevant peacekeeping missions". For Uruguay, "listening to the voices from the ground will lead to more credible and realistic mandates", or, as Pakistan put it, "their involvement in the processes of mission formation will address many issues related to command, control, communication, coordination and inter-mission movements".

2. Regional organs, bodies, offices and counterparts

A call for greater involvement of and enhanced cooperation with such regional organizations as the African Union and its subregional mechanisms, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, was also made by a number of delegations, including China, Chad, Nigeria, Italy, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Algeria, South Africa, the Sudan, Tunisia, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), Egypt, Costa Rica and Rwanda.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), also asked for more seriousness about the supporting partnerships and the complementary roles of the United Nations, regional organizations and counterparts, especially the African Union, in preventing and managing conflicts. Brazil added the need to consider new ways to improve the participation of regional and subregional organizations in the Council's decision-making process. Egypt emphasized the need for practical and more meaningful partnerships. As Rwanda summarized, "it is of great added value for the Council to maintain regular consultations with regional and subregional organizations ... for a better outcome in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and prevention. This kind of partnership will help the Security Council move from a culture of the daily management of crises to that of the effective prevention of conflicts".

With regard to concrete proposals aimed at enhancing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, South Africa implored the Security Council to give effect to its resolution 2033 (2012), in which it decided, in consultation with the African Union Peace and Security Council, to elaborate further ways of strengthening relations between the two Councils, including through achieving more effective annual consultative meetings, the holding of timely consultations and collaborative field missions of the two Councils, as appropriate, to formulate cohesive positions and strategies on a case-by-case basis in dealing with conflict situations in Africa. Referring to the situation in South Sudan, in which some members of the Security Council were ready to impose sanctions despite the African Union Peace and Security Council being seized with the matter and the unfolding processes at the African Union level, South Africa also called for more consistency in the way the Security Council coordinates its position with that of the African Union.

V. Selection of the next Secretary-General

Within the topic of the Security Council's cooperation with the General Assembly, the vast majority of speakers referred to the process for the appointment of the next Secretary-General as one of the key decisions to be made over the coming year. Quoting Costa Rica, "the election of the next Secretary-General will be a golden opportunity to increase the equality, transparency, predictability and inclusivity of this process and to further strengthen the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as it is a decision taken not by the 15 members of the Council alone but by the entire membership".

Setting the tone, the President of the General Assembly recalled that "through General Assembly resolution 69/321 ... the United Nations membership has unanimously provided clear guidance for the way forward. Specifically, they have requested that the General Assembly President and the President of the Security Council begin the process ... [by] jointly circulating a letter to the whole membership inviting candidates to be presented in a timely manner and describing the entire process. It is also envisaged that the Presidents of the General Assembly and Security Council would jointly circulate to all Member States, on an ongoing basis, the names of individuals who have been submitted for consideration as candidates, together with accompanying documents, including curricula vitae".

A. More transparency and inclusiveness of the wider membership

In order to move from an outdated way of selecting the Secretary-General, as the Czech Republic put it, Member States overall called for more transparency and inclusiveness, with General Assembly resolution 69/321 being broadly identified as the framework outlining the guidelines for such a process. As Rwanda underscored, it is in the interests of the credibility of the Organization. Paraguay also called for such a process to be dynamic, as well as for the Council and the Assembly to act in a coordinated and complementary manner, while Poland considered that greater interaction with the candidates should also guide the process. Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue of the appointment of the next Secretary-General on behalf of the ACT Group, specified the need to ensure that not only all Member States, but also the wider international community, have the possibility of learning about the vision of the candidates presented and interacting with them.

To this end, throughout the debate, the following concrete proposals were put forward:

(a) A clear timetable for the selection process (Mexico);

(b) The publication of a regularly updated list or the sharing of information on candidates (ACT Group, Colombia), as well as the membership to be kept abreast of developments (South Africa);

(c) The scheduling of meetings and hearings with declared candidates (ACT Group, Colombia, Czech Republic, Rwanda), with South Africa suggesting such engagement through a series of interactive dialogues in the General Assembly, and several others referring to, in terms of interactivity with the Security Council, Arria-formula meetings (Mexico, Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), South Africa);

(d) The Secretary-General should issue reports, as is usual, summarizing the proceedings (India).

B. Profile of the candidates

Side by side with the process, another important element of resolution 69/321 brought up during the meeting and highlighted from the outset by the President of the General Assembly related to the profile of the candidates. The United States looked forward to a process that leads to the appointment of the best possible candidate for the position of Secretary-General. Egypt added that "landmark resolution 69/321 paves the way for a transparent and merit-based selection process". The Holy See recalled that the membership deems that the criteria for qualified candidates must include proven leadership and managerial abilities, extensive experience in international relations and strong diplomatic communication and multilingual skills. For its part, Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue on behalf of the ACT Group, considered that the main concern should be ensuring that the best candidates come forward and are considered based on concrete selection criteria. South Africa suggested that the list of criteria should be developed in consultation with Member States and by drawing on the Charter of the United Nations and additional sources, such as previous Joint Inspection Unit reports on the criteria for senior management positions in the United Nations.

C. Gender equality/women candidates

The call for women candidates also strongly echoed throughout the debate. Lithuania, the Holy See and Tunisia underlined the need to consider equal and fair distribution based on gender. Germany and France firmly supported the call contained in General Assembly resolution 69/321, in which the Assembly invited Member States to consider presenting women as candidates for the position of Secretary-General, given that, to date, all the Secretaries-General have been men, while the United Kingdom affirmed that appointing a woman to the role would be more powerful still. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), suggested this element to be present from the outset, with the letter to be sent jointly by the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Security Council calling for qualified candidates, especially women.

The support of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Poland extended also to mainstreaming women's equality in the Organization, as, from their point of view, choosing a female Secretary-General would constitute a significant step towards achieving gender balance throughout the entire United Nations system.

While Argentina indicated that it would be desirable for at least one candidate to be a woman (of those put forward by the Council to the General Assembly), Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue on behalf of the ACT Group, argued that in making the final decision, preference should be given to equally qualified female candidates. Colombia recalled the initiative, joined by 48 Member States, of searching for suitable women candidates for the position and argued that the historic role that a woman could play at this new stage would be the beginning of great progress in reform.

D. Regional rotation

Views as to whether there is any requirement for geographical rotation were also expressed. The Holy See and Tunisia argued in favour of taking into consideration an equal and fair distribution of candidates based not only on gender, but also on geographical balance. Poland recalled that in the 70-year history of the Organization, the Secretary-General has never been appointed from among candidates from the Eastern European Group, therefore expressing support for the Council taking regional rotation duly into account in its recommendation of a candidate to the General Assembly.

E. Beginning of the process/timing of the decision

Although the Russian Federation indicated seeing no practical value in launching the selection process immediately, a number of delegations shared the opposite view and the expectation that the Council would do its part in ensuring that General Assembly resolution 69/321, adopted on 11 September 2015, is fully and promptly acted upon.

Among those who called for the launching of the process as early as possible were Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Egypt, Estonia, Australia, Turkey, Costa Rica and South Africa, with Estonia voicing the hope of the ACT Group to receive the joint letter in the coming weeks so as to set in motion the whole process before the end of 2015. The basis for an early commencement derives from the understanding that, as the President of the General Assembly underlined, providing adequate time for preparation prior to assuming office in the Organization is fundamental to ensuring the effective discharge of responsibilities during the transition period.

F. Within the Security Council: procedural suggestions and multiple candidates

Referring to the process within the Security Council, India argued that an important step would be to do away with secret straw polls using different coloured slips[n] that allow the five permanent members to exercise the veto without even taking ownership of it. India added that discussions should be held in official meetings of the Council, preferably open ones but not necessarily so.

At the same time, India, along with Chad, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Costa Rica, Argentina and South Africa, supported the call for the General Assembly to be able to choose among several candidates. As India put it, "while the pronouncements of the General Assembly do

[n] In 1981, the Council began the practice of conducting straw polls, under which members would indicate either encouragement or discouragement. In 1991, the practice of colour-coded ballots, with red for permanent members and white for elected members, emerged in later stages of the straw polls. By using this process, votes could be cast informally without holding an official meeting in the Council chamber or casting formal votes.

not specifically provide for it, there is, in our view, no legal impediment for the Council to do so". Among the reasons presented were enabling the entire membership to make the appointment and ensuring that the process includes an election, and not simply an appointment, so that the General Assembly can have a greater say in the selection of the Organization's highest position.

G. Term of office and re-election

In 1946, the General Assembly decided in its resolution 11(I) that the first Secretary-General should have a term of five years, renewable for a further five years. However, the resolution specifically provided that "the General Assembly and the Security Council are free to modify the term of office of future Secretaries-General in the light of experience".

Although a term of five years has become customary, it is discretionary. Thus, several Member States voiced their support for the principle of electing the future Secretary-General for only one term, even if, as Guatemala pointed out when referring to the provisions of resolution 69/321, no agreement was reached on the Secretary-General's term of office and re-election. Such were the cases of Chad and South Africa, with the latter specifically referring to a term of seven years, or Nepal, which argued that the term of the Secretary-General should be fixed and closed to extension to ensure that it is strong and effective, and to prevent the first term from being spent ensuring a second. For its part, Estonia, making additional remarks on behalf of the ACT Group, addressed the issue as yet to be settled, looking forward to a thorough discussion at the session of the duration of the term in office of the Secretary-General, including the option of a single, non-renewable term.

VI. Follow-up

A. Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions

As stated in the concept note for the debate, the Security Council has continued to adapt itself by constructively addressing several concerns relating to its working methods, thus making the working methods a dynamic and ongoing process.

Throughout the discussion, delegations highlighted a number of innovations introduced, often mentioning the range of previously agreed measures contained in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) and subsequent notes agreed by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.[7] However, as Switzerland, on behalf of the ACT Group, clearly pointed out, since the publication of the note by the President (S/2010/507), the Council has agreed on 10 subsequent notes, but their implementation has often proved to be unsatisfactory or inconsistent. Thus, along with a general call for their further implementation, several proposals were put forward, as well as areas in which to make further progress and means thereto, including through the Informal Working Group.

[7] S/2012/402, S/2012/922, S/2012/937, S/2013/515, S/2013/630, S/2014/268, S/2014/393, S/2014/565, S/2014/739 and S/2014/922.

Regarding the Informal Working Group, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), called for the Informal Working Group to base its future work on the common points of action from the outcomes of the open debate. Argentina proposed that, following the holding of open debates, the Informal Working Group take into account the areas of agreement among the broader membership as to how the Council works, underscoring two concrete issues: due process in the Council's sanctions committees, in particular with regard to the listing and delisting of persons, and the referrals made by the Council to the International Criminal Court.[5]

B. Security Council

At the same time, Paraguay called upon the members of the Security Council to take up the outcomes of the debate. For its part, and in order to facilitate follow-up, the ACT Group suggested that the Council prepare a note that would consolidate and streamline all decisions taken regarding working methods.

Without specifying the forum, Japan stated that there should be a move from theory to practice, adding that to improve the working methods of the Council, it is essential to further codify invisible customs and practices of the Council. For its part, Costa Rica noted that despite the calls of the membership, a plan of action for implementing the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) and its subsequent updates has yet to be adopted.

VII. Statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2015/19)

On 30 October 2015, 10 days after the open debate on its working methods, the Council adopted a statement by the President on the subject (S/PRST/2015/19).

The statement was the first Council decision in nearly a decade that was focused entirely on working methods, one of very few such documents in the overall practice of the Council and, although the initial draft text was circulated by Angola, New Zealand and Spain, the final text was the result of constructive engagement from all the Council members.

The statement builds on several of the issues addressed during the debate and registers advances in some areas regarding the Council's working methods, while, in other respects, it restates earlier commitments made by the Council. Nevertheless, perhaps its most important contribution was summarized by the President (Spain) at the adoption meeting: "I think it is a good sign that we are able to adopt texts that bind us in future to continue to work with greater efficiency and dedication".

[5] On the first issue, Argentina favoured including ombudspersons in all sanctions committees, beginning, as a first step, with the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities. On the referrals made by the Council to the International Criminal Court, Argentina noted that, despite the Council regularly receiving from the Prosecutor of the Court the reports required by its own resolutions, it takes no action in response, even when the Court informs the Council that cooperation required under the Council's resolutions has not been provided.